

REMARKS

Claims 16-39 are pending in this application. Non-elected claims 16-26 are withdrawn from consideration.

I. Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 27-39 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda et al. (US 6,189,771) in view of Imamura et al. (US 2002/0185309), and further in view of Mei (US 6,680,128) in view of Kang et al. (US 5,837,119). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner takes the position that the solder particles of Mei's solder composition are melted and then cooled to become solid again wherein the solder particles nucleate and grow. The Examiner states, "after the solidification process, the particles in the solder have returned". Thus, the Examiner's position seems to be that the molten solder particles become solder particles again in the resolidification process. However, this is completely incorrect, because the molten solder particles become a solder mass when solidified, which electrically connects electrodes. Therefore, the solidified solder mass would not contain metal powder in the form of scales that provide a better electrical conduction, as in the claimed invention.

In addition, although, as the Examiner notes, the claims do not require the scales to be in the solder (which should be "flux") composition after the reflow process, it is inherent that the heating step of the claims is carried out at a temperature at which the solder material is melted, while, at the same time, the metal powder is not melted. Therefore, one skilled in the art would recognize that this is inherent to the soldering process of the claimed invention.

Thus, claims 27 and 33 would not have been obvious over the references.

Claims 28-32 and 34-39 depend directly from claim 27 or 33, and thus also would not have been obvious over the references.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. Double Patenting Rejections

The Examiner has maintained the provisional rejection of claims 27, 33 and 39 on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 4-6 of copending application No. 10/585,729. The Examiner has also maintained the provisional rejection of claims 27, 33 and 39 on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 7,632,710.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to hold these rejections in abeyance, pending an indication that the claims are otherwise allowable.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner finds that anything further is needed to place the application in better condition for allowance, then she is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

Tadashi MAEDA et al.

/Andrew B.

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